



Tonto National Monument News Release

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ROOSEVELT, AZ – Tonto National Monument Celebrates Heritage Days on March 14 & 15

Tonto National Monument will join the statewide celebration of Arizona Archaeology and Heritage Awareness Month by hosting Heritage Days on Saturday, March 14 and Sunday, March 15. This weekend's activities will include various prehistoric technology demonstrations. The Apache culture will be represented by a group of White Mountain Apache dancers performing the Apache Crown Dance. Volunteers from the Adobe Mountain Wildlife Center in north Phoenix will be here with an assortment of live animals and birds that are native to Arizona.

Visitors will be able to preview the newly renovated Visitor Center museum which features a replica of a cliff dwelling room. This replica room shows how the dwellings were constructed over 700 years ago and what typical household items might be found in these rooms. The exhibits also feature many original artifacts which were well preserved by the dry environment of the cliff dwellings.

Visitors may hike to the Upper Cliff Dwelling on these two days. The Upper Cliff Dwelling is normally available only on ranger-guided tours and requires an advance reservation. The trail to the Upper Cliff Dwelling will open at 9:00 am. This 3-mile round trip, backcountry hike climbs 600 feet along a moderately strenuous, rocky trail and culminates with a number of switchbacks and uneven steps before reaching the Upper Cliff Dwelling. Part of the trail passes through a wash with many loose rocks and boulders. Bring water and wear sturdy shoes or hiking boots, a hat, and sunscreen. The trip lasts 2-3 hours, depending on your physical condition or the number of photos you want to take along the way. The trail to the Upper Cliff Dwelling will close to uphill travel at 2:00 pm. Pets are not permitted on the Upper Cliff Dwelling trail.

The Visitor Center is open from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm and offers new exhibits, an orientation video program, bookstore, and restrooms. A picnic area with several shaded tables is open until 4:45 pm. The paved trail to the Lower Cliff Dwelling is one mile round-trip, climbs 350 feet, and usually takes 45 minutes to an hour to complete. This trail closes to uphill travel at 4:00 pm. Leashed pets are permitted on this trail but not in the Lower Cliff Dwelling. The normal entrance fee of \$3.00 per person will be waived for this weekend. Tonto National Monument is located four miles east of Roosevelt Dam on State Highway 188.

Tonto National Monument protects two cliff dwellings built by the Salado people over 700 years ago. Established as a national monument in 1907 by President Teddy Roosevelt, the cliff dwellings were part of the archeological preservation movement in America. The Monument is open daily from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm except for Christmas. Directions and additional information are available on the Monument's website, <http://www.nps.gov/tont>, or you may call (928) 467-2241.

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